

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 01

Topic: Christmas Island Airport Fire Service

Hansard Page: p. 108 (Monday, 23/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you confirm that the Christmas Island Airport does not have its own fire engine and fire service?

Answer:

The Christmas Island Airport does not have its own fire engine or fire service. The Island's volunteer fire service would respond in the event of an emergency.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 02

Topic: Christmas Island Airport

Hansard Page: p. 109 (Monday, 23/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Christmas Island receives international flights, doesn't it? Many aeroplanes leave the airport with heavy freight and full fuel loads. Is it an airport that is considered high risk?

Answer:

Christmas Island currently receives a once-weekly international charter flight carrying a combination of freight and passengers between Christmas Island and Denpasar Airport on Bali. I am advised that freight loadings to Bali are light so this aircraft does not leave with heavy loads. The National Jet domestic service often leaves with higher loadings. However, it is a smaller aircraft and I am not aware that National Jet has expressed concerns about the safety risks of operating from Christmas Island Airport.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 06

Topic: Norfolk Island – Transfer of Title

Hansard Page: p. 91 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Essentially, what you are telling me is that the Government might be considering the joint Committee's Report but they have not factored it into their consideration of the process on the transfer of leasehold to freehold at the moment.

Answer:

The Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads has provided the following answer to the Honourable Senator's question:

While the views of the Joint Standing Committee are acknowledged, the Australian Government made the land transfer conditional on the Norfolk Island Government meeting a number of prerequisites, including implementing a new land management and planning regime, to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth. The Norfolk Island Government has met these prerequisites.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 07

Topic: Norfolk Island Leases

Hansard Page: p.91 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

How many leases are you expecting to sell off next year, or transfer and collect fees from?

Answer:

The Australian Government is not selling any leases; it is proposing to transfer a number of existing residential, rural and rural residential Crown leases to freehold title.

It is anticipated that offers of transfer for a total of 129 current leases will be made in 2005-06.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 08

Topic: Norfolk Island Governance

Hansard Page: p.92 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator Crossin asked:

What sorts of changes has the Norfolk Island Government made?

Answer:

This is largely a question for the Norfolk Island Government. However, the Department is aware that the Norfolk Island Government has progressed or plans to progress a number of matters raised by the Joint Standing Committee (JSC) in its December 2003 Report "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? Inquiry into Governance on Norfolk Island*".

For example, the *Legislative Assembly (Register of Members' Interests) Act 2004* was assented to in November 2004 and provides, inter alia, a Code of Conduct for Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The current Norfolk Island Government, issued in March 2005, its Priority Plan for 2004 – 2007. This Plan includes an expenditure and revenue review, administrative and governance review (including FOI, whistleblowers, Ombudsman and complaints-handling) and a review of community services.

Recent announcements have been made by the Norfolk Island Finance Minister in relation to new revenue measures and the conduct of a review of the Norfolk Island Administration.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 09

Topic: Norfolk Island Governance

Hansard Page: p. 92 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Whose decision was it to involve them?

Answer:

This was a decision of the Minister.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 10

Topic: Indian Ocean Territories Expenditure.

Hansard Page: p. 93 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you give us a bit of a breakdown of how the \$58.762m will be spent in the coming financial year?

Answer:

A detailed programme for 2005/06 is yet to be considered by the Minister.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 11

Topic: Indian Ocean Territories Receipts from Sale of Services.

Hansard Page: p. 94 (26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can I get a breakdown of that?

Answer:

The estimated revenue from the major services are:

Power	\$4.0m
Employee Housing	\$1.2m
Public Housing	\$0.7m
Ports and Marine	\$1.1m
Airport	\$0.5m
Water and Sewerage	\$0.7m
Health	\$0.2m

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 12

Topic: IOT Staffing

Hansard Page: p. 94 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can I be provided with the current staff profile with respect to Indian Ocean Territories—that is, how many staff are engaged on Christmas Island and how many staff are engaged in the Perth Regional Office on the Indian Ocean Territories matters?

Mr Wilson—I will take it on notice, Senator, to give you a precise answer. Do you mean departmentally-employed staff? There is a difference between staff that we employ departmentally and employ through the Program to deliver services on the Islands. The Minister employs staff under the Act on the Island to deliver services under the Program. The Department employs staff on Christmas Island and in Perth to administer the Program.

Senator O'BRIEN—can we have those figures as two separate sets?

Answer:

Including the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service the Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads directly employs by Ordinance 99 people to deliver services on Christmas and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. These people are principally employed in -

- (a) the health services such as doctors, nurses, and health professionals;
- (b) the school in positions such as assistant registrar, secretary, teacher's aide (otherwise known as educational assistants), library officer, cleaners, gardeners and laboratory worker;
- (c) the Christmas Island Power Authority which manages the generation and distribution of power on the Island;

- (d) positions with property management functions in respect of buildings owned by the Commonwealth (public and employee housing) for example, property manager, housing officer, maintenance officer, cleaners and gardeners; and
- (e) corporate administrative positions including finance and accounts.

These include on Christmas Island 60 ongoing staff, 19 fixed-term or temporary staff, and 13 intermittent or casual staff. On the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, there are three ongoing and four fixed-term staff.

The employees are employed pursuant to the Administration Ordinance 1968 of the Territory of Christmas Island or the Administration Ordinance 1975 of the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands and not the *Public Service Act 1999*.

In addition to these staff, there are two Departmental staff on Christmas Island.

In the Perth Regional Office, there are nine ongoing full-time and one ongoing part-time Departmental staff.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 13

Topic: Incorporation of Indian Ocean Territories into Western Australia

Hansard Page: p. 96 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator Crossin asked:

What consultation occurred then with people on the Indian Ocean Territories prior to that policy announcement [regarding incorporation into WA]?

Answer:

None, the decision to pursue incorporation of the Indian Ocean Territories into an existing State or Self-Governing Territory, with WA as the preferred option, was taken in the context of the Commonwealth's overall aim to move away from involvement in the delivery of such services in the Indian Ocean Territories as the delivery of State and Local Government services is not core Commonwealth business.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 14

Topic: Incorporation of Indian Ocean Territories into Western Australia

Hansard Page: p. 97 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

In the *Islander* on 24 March 2005, Mr Lloyd's letter tells the Christmas Islanders he would be in contact with the newly-elected Labor Premier of Western Australia to discuss closer cooperation. Do you know if the Minister has written to the Premier of Western Australia, or called him? Has the Government at any time since 2000 had serious discussion with the Western Australian Government about incorporation?

Answer:

The Minister has not been in contact with the Labor Premier of Western Australia.

Officer-level discussions between the Australian Government and the Western Australian Government are ongoing.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 15

Topic: Service Delivery Arrangements (SDA) Contract Details

Hansard Page: p. 97 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

How would we get the contract details? Are they 'do and charge' contracts or are they set-fee contracts?

Answer:

In accordance with the arrangement entered into between the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments in 1992, SDA services are provided on a full cost-recovery basis, so that the arrangements are cost-neutral to the Western Australian Government.

Each SDA includes an Operational Brief that details the agreed level of services that will be provided by the WA agency and the agency submits annual budgets they require to provide the agreed services.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 17

Topic: Market Testing for the Management and Delivery of Health Services for the Indian Ocean Territories

Hansard Page: p. 99-100 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is the Government proposing to put so called market testing of the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service on hold pending the outcome of the Joint Standing Committee inquiry which will look at service delivery?

Answer:

No, the Australian Government is not proposing to put market testing for the management and delivery of health services for the communities of the Indian Ocean Territories on hold.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 18

Topic: Market testing for the Management and Delivery of Health Services for the Indian Ocean Territories

Hansard Page: p. 100 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is the community going to get a say at any stage or will it be that the Government's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into? Do you know what the market testing process has cost the Commonwealth so far?

Answer:

The community has been informed of progress at key points throughout the market testing process and will continue to be so informed. Whether the outcome of market testing is to contract an experienced health care organisation to provide health services, or to remain with the Department of Transport and Regional Services as the Provider, the community will be consulted in the process of future service planning.

To date, the market testing process has cost \$4,138 for advertising; and \$83,463 for legal and probity advice. Other costs are absorbed as part of the regular work of the Department.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 19

Topic: IOT Health Service - Staffing

Hansard Page: p. 101 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is one of the Directors of Nursing an agency employee? How long has that been in place?

Answer:

Yes. The current Director of Nursing has been in this position since December 2004.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 20

Topic: IOT Health Service – Selection of Nurses

Hansard Page: p. 101-102 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Certainly a potential conflict of interest. I do not know what the evidence of performance show. Have you got any information about that?

Is it the case that that Director of Nursing is employed on a fly-in, fly-out basis?

I am told that she works extended hours and receives overtime payments for hours she assigns to herself when she is on-island.

Answer:

It is standard practice in the WA Country Health Service for small rural hospitals (of fewer than 20 beds) which have a Director of Nursing (DON) for that role to have both a clinical and management role. Any robust clinical management system requires clinical management staff to interact with staff over the 24/7 period, and to ensure clinical standards are being maintained. This oversight can only be achieved by management being physically present on those shifts. The issue also arises when a permanent DON is in place.

There are, however, management systems in place to address any potential conflict of interest. The Manager of the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) must give prior approval for any additional shifts to the DON's standard work hours and has a process in place for checking with the DON regarding rostering for clinical shifts. In addition, all DON hours and subsequent time sheets are signed by the Manager. The *IOTHS Code of Conduct* also requires all employees to avoid conflicts of interests and provides a process for addressing any perceived or real conflicts. The DON is not employed on a fly-in fly-out basis.

In relation to the use of a nursing agency, the Western Australian Nurses Agency (WANA) has been continually used by the IOTHS since 1999. WANA has provided two locum DONs in the past, for the periods May to June 2003, and July to

December 2003. This arrangement has not changed following the appointment of the current occupant.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 21

Topic: IOT Health Service – Nurses

Hansard Page: p. 102 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you give us a comparison of the cost of agency nurses versus direct employees?

Answer:

The average cost of an employed Registered Nurse is \$123,145.36 per annum.

These figures do not include the fact that for every full-time position, 1.3 FTE is required to cover the position over the period of a year.

The average cost of an Agency Registered Nurse is \$111,109.78 per annum.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 22

Topic: Market Testing for the Management and Delivery of Health Services for the Indian Ocean Territories

Hansard Page: p. 103 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you provide us the breakdown of the figure that is the existing comparison [cost for the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service against which the Government will assess proposals received through market testing]?

Answer:

No. This figure is being used in a commercial comparison which is still subject to Ministerial consideration.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 23

Topic: Market testing for the Management and Delivery of Health services for the Indian Ocean Territories

Hansard Page: p. 104 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Does the Government guarantee that no health service, including health promotion activities, will be cut or down-graded if the outcome of the market testing process is outsourcing?

Answer:

If the outcome of the market testing process sees health services outsourced, the existing range of services will be provided at a level which is suited to community need. This will include clinical services (eg primary medical care, dental, accident and emergency care, treatment, care and stabilisation of acute illness); community health programs (eg child health, diabetes education, cardiovascular health, and mental health); and support for access to secondary and tertiary care (eg specialist care and patient assisted travel). Health promotion activities are an integral and vital part of community health programs.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 24

Topic: IOT Health Service – Breast Screening

Hansard Page: p. 105 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator Crossin asked:

Will the [breast screening] service extends to women who might be held in detention on the Island?

Answer:

The Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) have indicated that they expect that when the local authorities advise the Detention Services Provider that the mammography/breast screening service is available on Christmas Island, they will work co-operatively to ensure that detainees have access to the service, in line with community standards.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 27

Topic: Christmas Island Economy

Hansard Page: p. 109 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Could you take on notice to provide for us references to Statements made by the Minister which indicate a commitment to help this community to develop and diversify its economy?

Answer:

Please see the **attached** documents for details of Statements made by Minister Lloyd:

- (A) 26th July 2004 - Minister Lloyd - Media Release
- (B) 12 August 2004 - Minister Lloyd - open letter to the Community of CI
- (C) 31 August 2004 – Minister Lloyd - Community Bulletin
- (D) November 2004 - Minister's Newsletter
- (E) December 2004 - Minister's Newsletter
- (F) February 2005 - Minister's Newsletter
- (G) May 2005 - Minister's Newsletter.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 28

Topic: Unemployment

Hansard Page: p. 109 (Thursday, 26/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator Crossin asked:

What is the current unemployment rate on Christmas and Cocos Islands?

Answer:

The 2001 Census of Population and Housing identified an unemployment rate of 8.1% on Christmas Island and 12.1% on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

As the Indian Ocean Territories are outside the scope of the monthly labour force survey, more up-to-date unemployment rates are not available.

Requests for any information required about payments of unemployment allowance should be referred to The Hon Kevin Andrews Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 29

Topic: Christmas and Cocos Islands Asset Transfers

Hansard Page: p. 4 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can a list of the assets under consideration for transfer be supplied to the Committee?

Answer:

A list of those assets under negotiation for transfer to the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands is **attached**. A comparable list does not exist for Christmas Island as negotiations have not progressed to that stage.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 30

Topic: Indian Ocean Territories Stamp Duty

Hansard Page: p. 7 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Do you know how much was collected to date?

Answer:

Approximately \$72,000 in stamp duty has been collected in 2004/05.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 31

Topic: Christmas Island Casino

Hansard Page: p. 9 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you refer me to the [Minister's] Statement [in which he re-states the Government's policy not to issue a license to operate a casino on Christmas Island]?

Answer:

The Minister's Statement of 12 August 2004 is **attached**.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 32

Topic: Government Policy on Casinos

Hansard Page: p. 10 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is it Government policy to prohibit casino operations around the country or just on Christmas Island?

Answer:

The Government's Announcement of 16 July 2004 related only to the Christmas Island casino.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 33

Topic: Christmas Island and Cocos Islands Audit Of Asbestos Risk

Hansard Page: p. 10 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

When did the Commonwealth last conduct an audit of asbestos risk for the residents of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands?

Answer:

The Government undertakes risk assessments of its property assets when major work on properties has been proposed or when potential risks have come to its attention. The last major assessment of asbestos risk was on Christmas Island and was completed in May 1990. A comprehensive inspection and assessment of asbestos risk on Indian Ocean Territory Programme property assets is currently underway on both Territories.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 34

Topic: Christmas Island Petroleum Tanks

Hansard Page: p. 12 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

So the tanks will be moved—is that right?

Answer:

No. The petroleum tanks are in good condition and operational in their current location at Rocky Point. Whilst the Department has had discussions with the Shire of Christmas Island concerning the possible alternate siting of the tanks, there are no plans for the Commonwealth to move them.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 35

Topic: Comcare Report

Hansard Page: p. 23 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is that report publicly available?

Answer:

The Department has confirmed with Comcare that the Report can be made publicly-available. A copy of the Report is **attached**.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 36

Topic: Overall Capital Program

Hansard Page: p. 13 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

When the decision is made, can this Committee have a copy of it?

Answer:

A copy of the approved 2005-06 Capital Funding Programme is **attached**.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 37

Topic: Christmas Island Club

Hansard Page: Page 13 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Who is the current occupier of the club (Christmas Island Club)? How would you identify the entity that occupies the club?

Answer:

The current occupier of the club is Goldwise Investments.

Goldwise Investments Pty Ltd is a proprietary company limited by shares. They have been advised that they can remain on the premises until such time as their business is wound-up and stock utilised on 19 November 2005 (whichever is sooner).

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 38

Topic: Christmas Island Town Plan and Businesses

Hansard Page: p. 14 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Which business vacated?

Answer:

Christmas Island Bus Service and Truck Hire has negotiated a licence to remain in their current location until August 2006. This licence provides a 14-month timeframe for the company to re-locate to the site sold to them in 1999 specifically for use as a bus depot.

Mining and Marine Ltd (M&M) has a site office near the current bus depot and was issued with a request to vacate on 4 March 2005. The local M&M representative advised DOTARS in April 2005 that it was preparing to re-locate the office to a site on Jalan Perak in Poon Saan. The local representative is currently away from Christmas Island and negotiations will continue upon his return.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 39

Topic: West Island Jetty Tests

Hansard Page: p. 16 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

What assessment has been made of its structural integrity?

Answer:

A review of the condition of the West Island jetty was undertaken in February 2005.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 40

Topic: Western Stevedores Proposal

Hansard Page: pp. 16-17 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Is it possible for the Committee to receive a copy of a description of the Western Stevedores proposal for freight handling facilities on West Island? With a diagrammatic explanation of the facility?

Answer:

Western Stevedores' September 2003 *Strategic Report on the Future Management of the Cocos (Keeling) Island Port* proposed the construction of a low profile, piled jetty with crane and adjacent hardstand at the current container-transfer location on West Island, and that the location be protected by a breakwater constructed of tetrapod modules. New shallow draft barges would also need to be purchased to enable transfer of freight directly between the new jetty and the ship.

A preliminary design for the jetty is included at **Attachment A**.

In subsequent discussions with the Department of Transport and Regional Services, Western Stevedores have modified the preliminary concept, extending the deck at the end of the jetty with a view to increasing the facility's wave-dampening capability, and removing the necessity for a tetrapod breakwater.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 41

Topic: West Island Burial Arrangements

Hansard Page: p. 18 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

The coordinates would not help me. You could probably point it out on a map. Can you do that on notice?

Answer:

On the 27 May 2005, the Department advised the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee that it was working with the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands to establish burial arrangements on West Island of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. In particular, the Department indicated that it was in discussion with the Shire regarding the transfer of Crown land for the purpose of a cemetery.

The Shire has since advised that it no longer requires Crown land for this purpose as it had previously identified a portion of land (controlled by the Shire) on West Island in their Town Planning Scheme. The **attached** map shows the proposed location.

SHIRE OF COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS
TOWN PLANNING SCHEME NO.1
SCHEME MAP – WEST ISLAND

**Proposed
location
of West Island
Cemetery**

SPECIAL USE SITE 2
(Transmitter Site)

SPECIAL USE SITE 1
(Former Quarantine Station)

SPECIAL USE SITE 4
(Antennae Site)

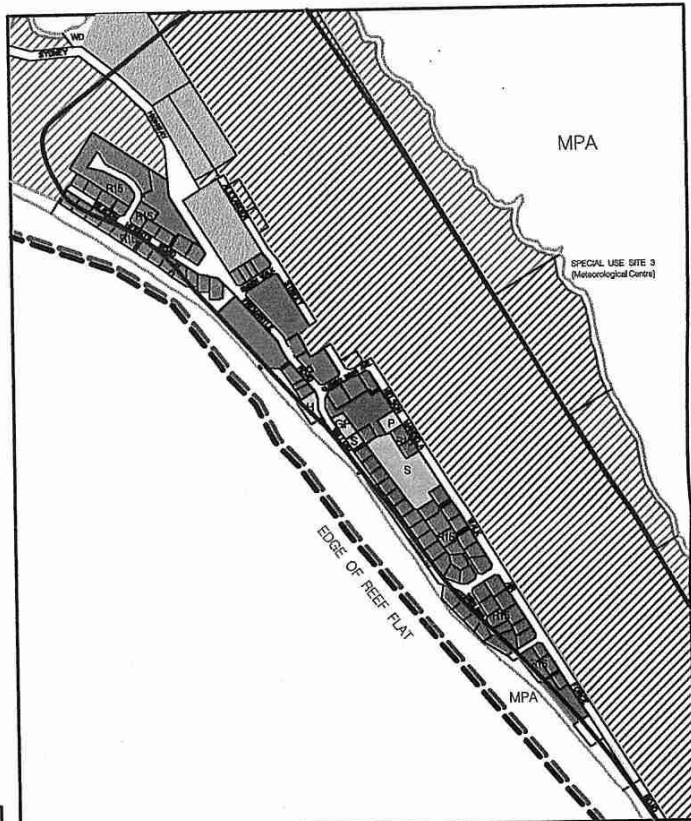
MPA

MPA

SEE ENLARGEMENT "A"

SPECIAL USE SITE 5
(Airport and Runway)

WEST ISLAND
PULU PANJANG



ENLARGEMENT "A"

EDGE OF REEF FLAT

EDGE OF REEF FLAT

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 42

Topic: Sworn Officers on Christmas Island

Hansard Page: p. 20 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

The AFP provides policing services in the Indian Ocean Territories. How many sworn officers are currently serving on Christmas Island?

Answer:

Policing on Christmas Island is currently provided by four mainland-based AFP officers and four locally-engaged Special Constables.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 43

Topic: Cocos (Keeling) Islands Education

Hansard Page: p. 20 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you tell me what vocational education and training courses are available on Cocos (Keeling) Islands?

Answer:

The Commonwealth funded Indian Ocean Group Training Association (IOGTA) is a registered training organisation with scope to provide accredited training in the following programmes:

- Certificates I, II, III and IV in Business;
- Certificates III and IV in Business Administration
- Certificate IV in Business (Small Business Management);
- Certificate III and IV in Business (Frontline Management);
- Certificates II and III in Conservation and Land Management;
- Certificate I and II in Information Technology;
- Certificate II in Information Technology (Applications);
- Certificate III in Information Technology (General);
- Certificate I and II in Hospitality (Operations);
- Certificate II in Tourism (Operations);
- Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training; and
- Diploma of Training and Assessment Systems.

IOGTA is able to deliver these courses on both Christmas and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

In addition, where there is sufficient community interest in a particular course, IOGTA has, with Commonwealth support, arranged for mainland trainers to visit the Territories to deliver training.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 44

Topic: Cocos Year 12 Retention Rate

Hansard Page: p. 20 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Do you know what the notional Year 12 retention rate for Cocos students is?

Answer:

The average rate for the past several years has been around 80 per cent, but due to measures initiated by the Cocos (Keeling) Islands District High School (assistance with Distance Education and the introduction of the Youth Advantage Scheme), the current Years 11 and 12 are running at 100 per cent retention.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 45

Topic: Year 12 Financial Assistance

Hansard Page: p. 20 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

What are the financial arrangements that apply to a student who wishes to undertake education to Year 12?

Answer:

It should be noted that Years 11 and 12 students from the Cocos (Keeling) Islands normally study in Perth and only a very small minority remain on-Island to continue their studies via distance education.

Students from both Christmas and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands who elect to study on the mainland are provided with 4 return trips to the Territories per year, similar to that available in WA for students living in remote communities. In addition, they are normally eligible for Assistance for Isolated Children (via Centrelink) and may be eligible for Youth Allowance Payment (via Centrelink) which is means tested.

Students who elect to remain on-Island (principally Christmas Island) receive no special allowances, but are provided with an annual return airfare to the mainland to attend distance education camps.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 46

Topic: Cocos Island Tourism Association Move

Hansard Page: p. 21(Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

I understand the Cocos Island Tourism Association is moving its offices closer to the airport. Has the Department provided any funding to assist the move or enable the Association to expand its office opening hours or visitor services?

Answer:

No specific funding was provided by the Department to assist with the move. However, the Cocos (Keeling) Island Tourism Association has submitted a detailed budgetary request to the Department for the 2005/2006 financial year which includes the rent for the new premises as well as assistance to expand its office opening hours and the services provided to visitors.

The Association's bid will be considered in the overall operating budget.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 47

Topic: Christmas Island Minister's Visit

Hansard Page: p. 22 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Can you ask the Minister why Senator Crossin was not invited?

Answer:

The Minister's trip to the Indian Ocean Territories was an official Ministerial Visit. All meetings and events during the Visit concerned Portfolio issues.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 48

Topic: Effects of Global Warming on Cocos

Hansard Page: p. 23 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Could you give me the reference for the late-nineties work and a copy of it?

Answer:

The work was completed in February 1993 by C.D Woodroffe of the University of Wollongong and RF McLean of the University of New South Wales. The title of the study is *Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Vulnerability to Sea-Level Rise*. It was part of a Report to the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories. A copy of the report is **attached**.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 49

Topic: Subsidy to National Jet Systems

Hansard Page: p. 3 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

How is that subsidy calculated? Is it effectively a guaranteed financial return- a profit?

Answer:

Should a subsidy be triggered, it would be based on the tendered budget submitted by National Jet. The budget cost does not include a profit margin. In effect, the Government would make up the difference between revenue obtained over the subsidy period and an adjusted budget cost of providing the services. Budgeted fuel and exchange rate costs are adjusted to reflect cost differences between the actual costs during the subsidy period and the costs assumed in the budget. Other budget costs are adjusted for CPI.

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Transport and Regional Services

Department of Transport and Regional Services

Consideration of Senate Budget Estimates May 2005

Question No.: TLG 50

Topic: Hovercraft Public Environment Report

Hansard Page: p. 15 (Friday, 27/05/05)

Output: Territories and Local Government

Senator O'Brien asked:

Does the Department have a copy and can the Committee be supplied with one if they do?

Answer:

The Department has a copy of the draft *Public Environment Report on Cocos (Keeling) Islands Hovercraft Operation Indian Ocean Territory*. I understand the Report has now been finalised and submitted to the Department of Environment and Heritage.

Copies of the Report are **available** from the Hovercocos website at http://www.hovercocos.com.au/index_files/Page457.htm